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BODEXPRESS UPSETS CODE OF HONOR IN GRADE I, \$500,000 CLARK AT CHURCHILL

LOUISVILLE, Ky. (Friday, Nov. 27, 2020) – **Bodexpress**, who made headlines as the riderless horse in the 2019 Preakness, is now a Grade I winner. The 4-year-old colt grabbed the lead with three-sixteenths of a mile to run and turned back a challenge from 8-5 favorite **Code of Honor** to win Friday's 146th running of the \$500,000 Clark Presented by Norton Healthcare (Grade I) at Churchill Downs by one length.

Owned by **Top Racing LLC** (Lucas Noriega), **Global Thoroughbred** (Rafael Celis) and **GDS Racing Stable** (Gustavo Delgado), Bodexpress clocked 1 1/8 miles on a fast track in 1:49.12 under jockey **Rafael Bejarano**, who rode the winner for trainer **Gustavo Delgado**. Son **Gustavo Delgado Jr.** was on hand to saddle the winner for his father.

The lofty \$282,100 first prize lifted the bay Kentucky-bred's earnings to \$694,600 from a record of 4-4-3 in 17 starts.

"This is a different horse than we saw last year during the Triple Crown campaign," Delgado Jr. said. "He's really matured. Turning for home I thought we had a really good shot. The horse deserves this most of all. I'm very happy for everyone involved but we are so happy for Bodexpress."

Breaking from post position No. 8 in the full field of 14, Bodexpress was forwardly-placed throughout the race. **Phantom Currency** dictated the early pace (:23.39 and :47.94) and had a 1 1/2-length advantage on Bodexpress leaving the first turn into the backstretch run. **Mr Freeze** found room along the rail and raced alongside Bodexpress. The trio bunched around the far turn and the leader began to fade. Mr Freeze briefly took over after six furlongs in 1:12.77 but Bodexpress made a three-wide move, stuck a nose in front at the 3/16-pole and inched clear inside the final furlong. Code of Honor made a four-wide bid down the stretch but did not have enough to get by the winner.

"This horse just showed so much run today," Bejarano said. "I'm so proud of him. (Phantom Currency) was going so fast on the lead and we were able to sit a really good trip just behind him. He relaxed very nicely for me and turning for home I could feel I still had a lot of horse underneath me. He had a lot of energy in deep stretch when we needed it to hold off the rest of the horses. It's very special winning a race like this returning to Kentucky to ride this year. This is my home and we've had a lot of success here in my career. This was very special."

Bodexpress, at odds of 11-1, rewarded his backers with mutuels of \$25.40, \$10.60 and \$7. Code of Honor, with **John Velazquez** up, returned \$4 and \$3. **Owendale**, under **Florent Geroux**, was another length back in third and paid \$3.80 to show.

"We got into a good spot on the backstretch in between horses," Velazquez said of Code of Honor. "We were chasing the speed of (Phantom Currency) and turning for home we didn't have a lot of room. When I finally got a spot to run around the eighth pole, (Bodexpress) kept going and we weren't able to catch him."

Coastal Defense finished fourth and was followed by Mr Freeze, **Silver Prospector**, **By My Standards**, **Bourbon Calling**, **Crafty Daddy**, **Title Ready**, **Multiplier**, **Aurelius Maximus**, **Plus Que Parfait** and Phantom Currency. **In Love (BRZ)** was scratched from the also-eligible list.

This was the first stakes victory for Bodexpress, who entered the race off a dominating 11 1/4-length allowance win over 1 1/16 miles at Gulfstream Park West on Oct. 17.

Bodexpress qualified to the 2019 Kentucky Derby (GI) as a maiden with a second place finish behind **Maximum Security** in that year's \$1 million Florida Derby (GI). He placed 13th in the Derby and, two weeks later, unseated jockey John Velazquez when he reared at the start of the Preakness. He galloped around the track far removed from the inner rail and became a social media sensation.

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Next up for Bodexpress is a likely run in the \$3 million Pegasus World Cup (GI) at Gulfstream on Jan. 23.

Bodexpress is son of Bodemeister out of the City Zip mare Pied a Terre and was bred by **Martha Jane Mulholland**.

CLARK QUOTES

Rafael Bejarano, jockey of BODEXPRESS (winner): “This horse just showed so much run today. I’m so proud of him. (Phantom Currency) was going so fast on the lead and we were able to sit a really good trip just behind him. He relaxed very nicely for me and turning for home I could feel I still had a lot of horse underneath me. He had a lot of energy in deep stretch when we needed it to hold off the rest of the horses. It’s very special winning a race like this returning to Kentucky to ride this year. This is my home and we’ve had a lot of success here in my career. This was very special.”

Gustavo Delgado Jr., assistant trainer of BODEXPRESS (winner): “This is a different horse than we saw last year during the Triple Crown campaign. He’s really matured. Turning for home I thought we had a really good shot. The horse deserves this most of all. I’m very happy for everyone involved but we are so happy for Bodexpress.”

John Velazquez, jockey of CODE OF HONOR (runner-up): “We got into a good spot on the backstretch in between horses. We were chasing the speed of (Phantom Currency) and turning for home we didn’t have a lot of room. When I finally got a spot to run around the eighth pole, (Bodexpress) kept going and we weren’t able to catch him.”

Florent Geroux, jockey of OWENDALE (third): He ran a good race. I’m proud of his effort. We tried to reel in the winner in the stretch but just came up short.”

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